



South Dakota Department of the Military South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs



WE'RE RAVING IT UP!!!!!!

Operation RAV continues to make a difference both at the open houses and the phone campaign!!!! To dates 24 open houses have been hosted throughout the state.

We're also getting some wonderful media coverage – last week the Rapid City Journal endorsed "Operation RAV and its vision!!!!

http://rapidcityjournal.com/news/opinion/editorial-calling-all-veterans/article_87de905a-e88a-5cb6-9cb8-3c365ade8bfa.html

Below are two links to the Pierre Capital Journal and the Mitchell Daily Republic — great articles about what we're doing!!!!

<http://www.mitchellrepublic.com/content/operation-reaching-all-veterans-vets-gather-learn-about-benefits>

http://www.capjournal.com/news/va-reaches-out-to-local-veterans/article_19cb3bc4-c52a-11e3-a9c8-0019bb2963f4.html



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Heroes Among Us—
showcasing 125 South Dakota
veterans.



HEROES AMONG US

This week's "Heroes among Us" is a salute to South Dakota's military kids — they are the heroes among us!!!!!!

We know that military children face many challenges that are unique to their situation, such as having a parent deployed for extended periods of time, or multiple times, and moving frequently. Deployments and family separations can be stressful times for children.

Our military children are resilient and proud of their service, and they deserve our support!!!!!!

The military child as they grown and become youth into the teenage years, are an inspiration and a source of pride for our nation.



From the halls of the South Dakota Department of Military and the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs to the campus of the Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home — we PURPLED UP to show that this nation and this state stand by our military children and recognize their strength and the sacrifices they have made!!!!!!



HEROES AMONG US

Ruth Margaret Kinser was born in Remington, Indiana, on Aug 9, 1927, where she lived with her parents until the age of 19. At that time she and her parents moved to the White Lake SD area.

In 1950, Ruth enlisted in the Army at Sioux Falls and attended Basic Training at Fort Lee VA. Upon completion of Basic, Ruth was assigned to Headquarters Company and worked in the Motor Pool. Her next assignment was to St Louis, MO in the finances department. She was temporarily assigned to Fort Riley KS, when she attended 405 school for typing skills. She then returned to St Louis.

It was around this time that the United States Army and the Army Air Corps split and the United States Air Force was born. The Army moved to Fort Harrison, IN and the Air Force moved to Denver, CO. Ruth was then sent to finance school with 100 GI's for eight weeks. She spent much of the rest of her time back and forth showing the civilians how to work the Army way.

After three years with Finance Co, Ruth was sent to Camp Atterbury. Upon her discharge, she returned to Kimball.

She later met her future husband, Raymond and farmed in the White Lake area. Ruth and Raymond lived in the White Lake area.

Ruth continues to stay active in the American Legion where she held the position of finance officer for a number of years.

Thank you Ruth, for your service to this great country!!!!



VA2K WALK AND ROLL

The Sioux Falls VA Health Care System will host a VA2K Walk and Roll on May 21, 2014, from 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM. The walk encourages healthy activity while supporting homeless veterans with donated items.

The VA2K Walk and Roll is free and open to employees, veterans, and the general public. Registration will take place in the main lobby of the medical center, and walkers may walk a route around the VA neighborhood. In the event of inclement weather, there will be a designated route inside the medical center. Pre-registration is not required, and those interested in participating should plan to arrive at the main lobby no later than 12:30 PM to participate in the walk.

The Sioux Falls VA2K is just one of many taking place May 21 at other VAs across the country. In conjunction with the event. The VA is authorized to accept items for homeless veterans. Suggested donations include all purpose cleaners, mops, brooms, laundry supplies, and bus passes. Individuals are not required to donate to participate.

The event is open to individuals of all fitness levels and can be done over a lunch break. Whether you team up with a coworker, a friend, or participate on your own, there's no better time to step up your activity level and help improve the lives of homeless Veterans. For additional information, please contact Denise Schwardt, local VA2K Coordinator, at 605-336-3230, Ext. 7946 or denise.schwardt@va.gov.

VABHHCS RECOGNIZES SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH

April is National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month and VA BHHCS joins with their community-wide partners to raise awareness about this important issue. Sexual assault impacts veterans and active-duty service members who are living with the effects of Military Sexual Trauma (MST). Military Sexual Trauma is the term used by the VA to refer to sexual assault or repeated, threatening sexual harassment experienced during military service. The VA offers specialized recovery services for both men and women who have experienced MST.

"We know that survivors of sexual trauma are not likely to talk about their experiences unless asked directly. The VA has a policy to screen every veteran for MST to make sure they know about the services available to them," said Christy Kitzelman, MST Coordinator. "A veteran isn't required to produce documentation of a reported incident to begin receiving help in their recovery."

The VABHHCS has trained sexual trauma professionals who provide confidential counseling and treatment for associated mental and physical health conditions. MST-related services are separate from the disability compensation process and service connection is not required. Veterans may be able to receive MST-related care even if they are not eligible for other VA care.

VABHHCS invites veterans and the public to attend an educational program on MST with guest speaker Christy Kitzelman, MST Coordinator, VABHHCS. The program entitled "Top Ten Facts Everyone Should Know about Military Sexual Trauma" takes place on April 24th at 12:00 pm at the Ft. Meade Medical Center Campus, Building 145, Room 108. The program will be broadcast to the Hot Springs Campus, Building 1, Room 212; the Rapid City Outpatient Clinic, 3625 5th Street, Room 133; and the Pine Ridge Outpatient Clinic, next to Indian Health Services. Veterans are invited to take part in wellness and education screenings from 11:30 am – 12:00 pm at Ft. Meade, Hot Springs, and Rapid City locations.

To learn more about Military Sexual Trauma (MST) and available services through VABHHCS call 1-605-718-1095 extension 3018.

Upcoming Events

2014

May 2-4—DAV State Convention—Ramkota Hotel—Aberdeen
May 2-4—Vietnam Era Reunion—Deadwood Gulch—Deadwood
May 6—SDDVA Mini Conference—Sturgis - Veterans Club, 868 Main Street—10:00 am (MT)
May 7—SDDVA Mini Conference—Pierre - American Legion, 520 S. Pierre Street—10:00 am (CT)
May 8—SDDVA Mini Conference—Brookings - City/County Building, 520 3rd Street—10:00 am (CT)
Jun 5-8—VFW State Convention—Custer
Jun. 19-22—American Legion State Convention—Ramkota Hotel—Pierre
Jul. 7—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—BHNC—9:00 am
Aug. 6—DOL Veterans Job Fair—Augustana College Elmen Center—10:00 am—2:00 pm
Aug. 25-29—NACVSO Training Ramkota Hotel—Pierre
Oct. 6—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—BHNC—9:00 am

Saturday, April 26 - BodyTalk South Dakota would like to say "THANK YOU" to the National Guard & their families by hosting a free BodyTalk workshop as part of their community services project! Saturday, April 26 from 9:15 - 10:45 AM. Rapid City Public Library ~ Helen Hoyt Room. Come learn a BodyTalk technique that balances the brain and receive a BodyTalk balancing from local BodyTalk Access Technicians. Experience the fastest growing health modality in the world. For more information, please visit <http://BodyTalkSouthDakota.com/> Contact Melanie Palm at 605.484.6765 for more information or with any questions. All ages are welcome.

Saturday, May 10 - at 10:00 am - 2:00 pm. From diapers and night feedings to recitals and soccer games, the responsibilities of child-rearing can be especially difficult for military families. We understand the unique stresses of military life, so we want to serve your family through an off-post, Army Chaplain led, Strong Bonds one-day retreat. In addition to relevant teaching and skills training, there is time for relaxation, recreation, fellowship and fun. You'll gain practical, useful information based on curriculum designed especially for military families. Email jen-na.m.watkins.mil@mail.mil with any questions you might have or to obtain a registration form.

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